

# ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

## *Policies and Procedures*

***Title:*** Check-Out of Separating Employees

***Number:*** 4296

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***Distribution:*** All Agencies

This P&P establishess procedures for processing employees who separate from the Economics agencies. It also explains how to complete form EMS-235, Checklist-Separating Employees.

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## **1. Introduction**

When employees leave one of the Economics agencies, their agencies must ensure that separating employees either settle or arrange to settle outstanding financial liabilities and return all accountable items for which they are responsible. Each agency should follow a coordinated set of actions to complete check-out procedures before employees leave. Agency heads must ensure that all separating employees use the same check-out procedures and issue specific instructions, which should be located in their agencies' directives systems. Agency heads should also determine if they desire collection actions against employees for outstanding debt or loss of property.

## **2. Initiation of Separation**

Employees should notify their supervisors of plans to resign their positions as soon as possible, preferably 2 weeks in advance. By giving notice, employees and agencies can resolve post-employment matters quickly and efficiently. Upon such notification, supervisors, except those in NASS, will provide separating employees with form EMS-253, Checklist—Separating Employees. Employees must then obtain appropriate signatures on EMS-253s, after supervisors have explained the form clearly, given appropriate guidance, and followed directions shown on the form. In NASS, either the Human Resources Staff (headquarters) or an administrative technician (field) obtains all signatures on EMS-253. Meanwhile, supervisors should initiate forms SF-52, Request for Personnel Action (i.e., the separation action).

## **3. Completing Paperwork**

Take form EMS-253 to various officials for signature. Supervisors can sign off on certain items, whereas, other managers and persons in other agencies must sign for other items (see chart below).

Item	Required Action	Approving Official
<b>I. Identification/Property</b>		
1. USDA Photo ID Card	Collect and destroy.	ERS: AO NASS HQ: HRS NASS SSOs: AT Others: Supervisor
2. Lock-up Pass	Collect and destroy. (ERS: return to AO).	ERS: AO* NASS: Agricultural Statistics Board* WAOB: Deputy Chairperson*
3. Official Government Passport	Return to Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS).	FAS*
4. Property	Check that employee has returned all items. Notify PSS of unreturned property. Also, ensure that employee has returned all accountable items such as keys, software, and manuals.	ERS: AO NASS SSOs: AT Others: Supervisor
5. Accountable Items		
6. Reference Materials	Check that employee has returned all reference materials.	ERS: ERS Librarian
7. Elevator, Building, and Parking Lot Access Cards	Collect and return to the Head of PSS or appropriate office.	ERS: AO NASS HQ: HRS NASS SSOs: N/A Others: Supervisor
<b>II. Financial</b>		
8. Travel Advance	Check that employee has no outstanding travel advances.	ERS: AO* NASS HQ: BAS NASS SSOs: AT Others: FMS
9. Imprest Fund Advance	Check that employee has no outstanding imprest advances.	ERS: AO* NASS SSOs: N/A Others: Supervisor

Item	Required Action	Approving Official
III. Service Agreements		
10. First Duty Station	Check that employee fulfilled agreements.	ERS: AO NASS: HRS Others: CEB
11. Transfers		
12. Long-term Training		EMS's Employee Development Section
IV. Credit Cards		
13. Visa	Return to the Head of EMS's Procurement Section.	EMS's Procurement Section*
14. American Express	Return to FMS.	ERS: COS* NASS HQ: BAS NASS SSOs: AT Others: FMS*
15. Commercial Telephone	Return to the Head of PSS.	ERS: AO* NASS: PSS* Others: N/A
16. Supply Cards		ERS: AO* NASS HQ: BAS NASS SSOs: N/A Others: Supervisor
17. AT&T Federal Calling Card	Return to MAB.	MAB*
V. Security		
18. Debriefing	Make sure form AD-491 has been signed, if required.	ERS: DSC Security Officer Others: Supervisor
19. ADP	Remove all passwords and logon identifications.	EAS, ERS & OE: DSC Security Officer NASS HQ: SID NASS SSOs: Supervisor EMS: Technical Support Staff WAOB: ADP Coordinator
20. Custodian of Classified Materials	Notify MAB to change combinations.	OE: Director WAOB: Deputy Chair Others: Supervisor
21. Official Records	Make sure records have not been removed.	Supervisor
22. Office Doors	Notify EMS's Space Section to change combinations and locks.	NASS HQ: HRS All Others: Supervisor

Item	Required Action	Approving Official
VI. Administrative		
23. Leave Audit (AD 717)	Conduct a leave audit using form AD-717. If the audit reveals outstanding leave balances, notify PD, which will initiate a process with NFC to collect for employee indebtedness. Obligate funds for any lump-sum leave payments.	ERS: AO NASS HQ: HRS NASS SSOs: AT Others: Supervisor
24. Lump-sum Payments (AD 581)		
25. Official Listings	Notify those who maintain lists to remove name.	ERS: AO NASS: Supervisor Others: MAB
26. Last T&A Marked Final	Mark last T&A "final."	Supervisor
VII. Exit Interview		
27. Exit Interview	Meet with designated agency official.	ERS: Assistant to Administrator OE: Director Others: N/A

\* Only if applicable. If the item clearly does not apply to the employee, the **supervisor** may check "N/A," sign, and date the line item.

AO = Administrative Officer

BAS = Budget & Administrative Group, NASS

COS = Central Operations Staff, ERS

FMS = Financial Management Section, EMS

MAB = Management Analysis Branch, EMS

PD = Personnel Division, EMS

AT = Administrative Technician

CEB = Classification & Employment Branch, EMS

DSC = Data Services Center, ERS

HRS = Human Resources Staff, NASS

PSS = Property & Services Section, EMS

SID = Systems & Information Division, NASS

## Summary of Responsibilities

### **Agency Heads**

- Ensure that all separating employees use the same check-out procedures.
- Issue specific instructions for completing the form EMS-253.
- Develop internal procedures according to the agency's administrative structure to provide EMS with all necessary forms and clearances to process separations or to collect outstanding debts.
- Determine personally or through a designee if collection action is desired for any outstanding debt or loss of property.

### **Director, EMS Personnel Division**

- Initiates the process with NFC to collect for employee indebtedness relating to outstanding leave balances.

### **Head, EMS Property and Services Section**

- Initiates collection of accountable property, when necessary.

### **Designated Supervisors, Administrative Officers, and Other Officials**

- Ensure that separating employees have properly completed all appropriate forms.
- Notify EMS's Personnel Division of outstanding leave or training balances, and notify EMS's Property and Services Section of any unreturned Government property.
- Conduct appropriate leave audits.
- Notify EMS's Personnel Division in writing prior to payment of final T&As, if collective action is necessary.

### **Employees**

- Notify supervisors of planned separation date as soon as known.

- Return to the office any Government-owned items prior to separation.
- Arrange for repayment of any outstanding debts.
- Clear all items on form EMS-253 through designated officials.